



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

General Plan Referral

Date: April 4, 2017

Case No. Case No. 2016-008708GPR – 964 Natoma Street (City Acquisition of Real Property for Open Space -- Recreation and Parks Department)

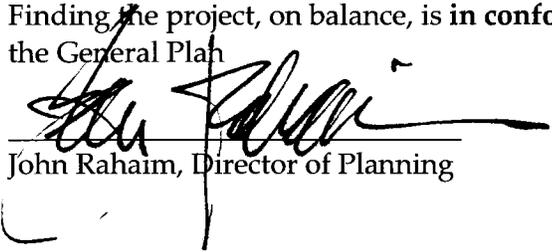
Block/Lot No.: Block 3510, Lots 035, 037, 039, 055, 056

Project Sponsor: John Updike, Director
San Francisco Real Estate Division
25 Van Ness Ave. Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94102

Applicant: Josh Keene (contact)
San Francisco Real Estate Division

Staff Contact: Scott T. Edmondson, AICP (415) 558-6818
Scott.Edmondson@sfgov.org

Recommendation: Finding the project, on balance, is in conformity with the General Plan

Recommended By: 
John Rahaim, Director of Planning

1650 Mission St.
Suite 400
San Francisco,
CA 94103-2479

Reception:
415.558.6378

Fax:
415.558.6409

Planning
Information:
415.558.6377

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Project is the City's proposed purchase of five parcels (total area of 19,500 sq.ft.) located between Minna and Natoma Streets and bordered by 11th Street on Block 3510, with addresses and lots as follows: 145-147 11th St (055 & 056), 165-167 11th St (037), 964 Natoma St (035), 973 Minna St (039) (see Attachment 1, Project Parcel Map). If the Project is approved, the Recreation and Parks Department would let existing commercial leases expire. The Department anticipates developing these parcels into open space and a public park at some point in the future after the leases expire. This would require demolition of four buildings with a Planning Department "A"-rated historical resources. The future demolition would require CEQA review and compliance. The proposed Project would add a public park to District 6 and to an area in need of parks (see General Plan, Parks & Open Space Element, Map 7, p 24, and the discussion of Policy 2.1, below, in the next section).

Current uses on the Project site are as follows: refrigerator sales, wholesale, nursery (floral), office, and warehouse. Existing zoning on the five parcels is Residential Enclave-Mixed (RED-MX) or WSOMA Mixed Use-General (WMUG). Both Land Use Districts allow the anticipated public park and open space use by right and allow the change of existing PDR uses to other uses allowed within the Districts. Only PDR and SALI Land Use Districts prevent or limit the change of existing PDR uses to other uses. No other guidelines, moratoriums, or other regulatory mechanisms that control the change of PDR land use apply to the Project site.

The submittal is for a General Plan Referral to recommend whether the Project is in conformity with the General Plan, pursuant to Section 4.105 of the Charter, and Section 2A.52 and 2A.53 of the Administrative Code.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Per CEQA Guidelines Section 15060(c)(2), the proposed acquisition of the 11th Street Properties is not considered a project as defined by CEQA, since it is an activity that will not result in a direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change on the environment.

GENERAL PLAN COMPLIANCE AND BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION

The Project is the City's proposed acquisition and/or lease of property containing an existing structure with office, warehouse space and off-street parking areas for use by the Department of Technology. The Project is consistent with the Eight Priority Policies of Planning Code Section 101.1 as described in the body of this letter and is, on balance, **in-conformity** with the following Objectives and Policies of the General Plan:

RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENT

POLICY 2.1

Prioritize acquisition of open space in high needs areas

Priority for acquisition of new space to address open space inequities should be given to high need areas, defined as places where there is low access to open space (illustrated in Map 4: Walkability), a conglomeration of high density, high percentages of children, youth, seniors, and low income households (illustrated in Map 5: Population Density, Household income, Concentration of Children and Youth, Concentration of Seniors), and in which the most growth is projected to occur between now and 2040 (illustrated in Map 6: Areas of Potential Additional Population Growth, 2040).

The proposed Project directly meets Policy 2.1. The project site is in an area of high need (see Map 6, p. 24, of the Element referenced in the preceding paragraph) and the southeast quadrant of the City will receive a majority of the projected growth.

WESTERN SOMA AREA PLAN**Open Space****OBJECTIVE 7.1: Identify New Park Site Opportunities****POLICY 7.1.1: Identify opportunities to create new public parks, recreation facilities and open spaces and provide at least one new public park or open space serving Western SoMa.**

The proposed Project directly meets Objective 7.1 and Policy 7.1.1. of the West SoMa Element. The project site is in an area of high need (see Map 6, p. 24, of the Element referenced in the preceding paragraph) and the southeast quadrant of the City will receive a majority of the projected growth.

PROPOSITION M FINDINGS – PLANNING CODE SECTION 101.1

Planning Code Section 101.1 establishes Eight Priority Policies and requires review of discretionary approvals and permits for consistency with said policies. The Project, demolition and replacement of the Chinese Recreation Center, is found to be consistent with the Eight Priority Policies as set forth in Planning Code Section 101.1 for the following reasons:

Eight Priority Policies Findings

The subject project is found to be consistent with the Eight Priority Policies of Planning Code Section 101.1 in that:

The proposed project is found to be consistent with the eight priority policies of Planning Code Section 101.1 in that:

1. That existing neighborhood-serving retail uses be preserved and enhanced and future opportunities for resident employment in and ownership of such businesses enhanced.

Acquisition under the Project would allow current commercial tenants to remain until their leases expire. Anticipated development of the park at a future time--unknown and unplanned now--would eliminate one region-serving refrigerator retails sales business but would not be expected to adversely affect neighborhood serving retail in the area.

2. That existing housing and neighborhood character be conserved and protected in order to preserve the cultural and economic diversity of our neighborhood.

The Project would have no adverse effect on the City's housing stock or on neighborhood character. The existing housing and neighborhood character will be not be negatively affected. Current uses are not residential.

3. That the City's supply of affordable housing be preserved and enhanced.
The Project would have no adverse effect on the City's supply of affordable housing. There would be no eventual demolition of housing as current uses are not residential, but commercial.

4. That commuter traffic not impede MUNI transit service or overburden our streets or neighborhood parking.
The Project would not result in commuter traffic impeding MUNI's transit service, overburdening the streets or altering current neighborhood parking. The park would be a neighborhood serving park. It would not be expected to generate substantial commuter traffic.

5. That a diverse economic base be maintained by protecting our industrial and service sectors from displacement due to commercial office development, and that future opportunities for residential employment and ownership in these sectors be enhanced.
The Project would change existing commercial uses on the five parcels to park and open space use, but this would not be expected to substantially affect the existing economic base in this area.

6. That the City achieves the greatest possible preparedness to protect against injury and loss of life in an earthquake.
The Project would not adversely affect achieving the greatest possible preparedness against injury and loss of life in an earthquake. It could improve the City's ability to respond to injuries caused by earthquakes and other emergencies because the park could be used for temporary shelter in the aftermath of an emergency event.

7. That landmarks and historic buildings be preserved.
The property acquisition would not adversely affect the "A"-rated historical buildings on the project site.

8. That our parks and open space and their access to sunlight and vistas be protected from development.
The Project would have no adverse effect on parks and open space or their access to sunlight and vista.

RECOMMENDATION:

Finding the Project, on balance, in-conformity with the General Plan

cc: Josh Keene, Real Estate

ATTACHMENT 1 – Project Parcel Map

